

News and Views

Newsletter of the Divine Providence Province



Legacy Remembered Lent 2018: Prayer and Suffering...

As we are in the Lenten season, it would be appropriate to reflect upon the greatest testament which our beloved Founder St. Louis Guanella left to us his disciples: **Prayer and Suffering**. It can be well understood from the words of Bishop Aurelio Bacciarini, the successor of Fr. Guanella. **Prayer** is the first necessary condition for the stability, progress and success of the Houses of Fr. Guanella. He also differentiates *prayer* and *the spirit of prayer*: **Prayer** is the common and ordinary invocation of God that we raise to Him during the day. **Spirit of prayer** is something more intense and deeper. Therefore for these extraordinary charitable acts not only mere human hands are needed but also the kind and strong intervention of God. Without the spirit of prayer, we would not receive God's favors. Hence it is a requirement for every member of a community and whole of the congregation to be soaked in prayer and make the Houses of Charity real tabernacles of constant praise to God. How to make our life prayer? a) *from the Altar of the Holy Eucharist, let us draw the treasures of Divine Mercy* b) *from the reception of Holy Communion, let us unite ourselves with Jesus with the fervor of saints, so that nothing of this*

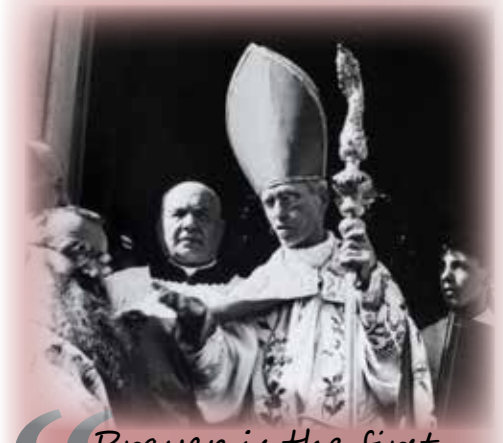
world may separate us from Him c) *From the Holy Tabernacle - Paradise on Earth - let us sanctify our work, our travelling and our rest by keeping our hearts and minds on the Lord, in conversation with heaven.*

Suffering is a word that drips drops of blood. Unless and until one is filled with the spirit of prayer, it is highly difficult to understand the term suffering. From the very life of Jesus, we can perceive that there is no redemption without the cross, suffering. The Church of Jesus Christ floats on the blood of the martyrs. All her triumphs are rooted in suffering. The Houses of Fr. Guanella were born from martyrdom. Fr. Louis Guanella suffered martyrdom in everything: contradictions, accusations, opposition, humiliations, disappointments, hunger, thirst, tiredness, agonies of body and soul. Let us understand that suffering is the key to reach paradise. As imitators of Jesus Christ and followers of Fr. Guanella, let us strive to endure daily suffering, suffer discomforts and privations, endure and carry the crosses that faithfully accompany our daily lives. The very legacy of Prayer and Suffering teaches us a lesson to despise the world and detach ourselves from its allurements. Let us live in God by prayer and suffering as our beloved Father and Founder did.

At the invitation of our Holy Father the season of lent is a favorable time which is offered by God as 'a sacramental sign of our conversion. Lent summons us and enables us, to come back to the Lord wholeheartedly, and in every aspect of our lives'. Prompted by Pope Francis, we shall recollect the aspect of prayer and suffering as Guanellians. He says that prayer should become the driving force to

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“Prayer is the first necessary condition for the stability, progress and success of the House.”

Venerable Bishop Bacciarini

enable us to reach out to the poor, marginalized and the victimized. Prayer is the constant response of our hearts to the will of God. The attitude of penance reminds us that we need to suffer with endurance, to say no to our selfishness. Acts of charity should be the constant striving of our hearts to share our time and resources with those who have nothing or nobody.

Added to our own physical, psychological, socio-economic problems, the present religious and political situation impels us to march forward with much courage to face the prejudices and persecutions against us Christians in order to be rooted out from a particular country or territory. Generally this might arouse in us questions like *where is God? Why all these to us alone?* and make us lose hope in God. On a positive note this happens to us because God wants to communicate with us but we are busy

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doing our work. Often we are *after our minds* by being too much indulged in social networks, technology, media which keeps us away from the creator who is behind every sphere. Rather we are called to be *after our hearts* from where love proceeds and inclines us to care for the anthropological aspect of our existence. It is high time this Lent that we fast from the media, network culture and be rooted in communicating with God in prayer and receive graces to face our trials and tribulations. **May this Lenten Season help us to have metanoia and a fruitful celebration of the Resurrection of the Lord.**

Fr. Soosai Rathinam

The Road to Recovery By Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, SdC

I met Cruz on a sidewalk in Detroit begging for money: she was addicted, hungry and homeless. I convinced her to enter a residential program where she would be treated with dignity and love. She accepted. I drove her with the promise of visiting her as often as I could. Cruz spent three years trying to get around that mandate as she stayed stuck in the disease of addiction. Not until she finally gave up faking it, got honest with herself and got into recovery did she make any progress. The two-word requirement fundamental to sobriety is rigorous honesty.

Cruz grew up in a rough part of East Detroit, MI, where her drug addiction was almost inevitable. She lived in the drug world and she inherited the genetic brain disease. At age 13, her drug was marijuana and she got hooked on cocaine at age 18. By the time she was in her forties she lost everything, including her four children. Cruz moved away to get a new start, but she found out that her disease came with her. Between 2001 and 2007, she spent three years in jail for committing crimes to buy drugs. She wasn't a good criminal, because she always got caught.

In jail, for the first time, she wanted to be sober. In 2014, she entered Our Hope, the women's recovery home in the Heritage Hill district of Grand Rapids. That's when she first tried to get honest. She told her therapist, "I was afraid of my feelings, so I buried them with anger and drugs." Cruz stayed sober in a Recovery Roadhouse for six months before disaster struck. The father of her children went to prison for dealing drugs, and since



she didn't have custody of them, her four children were given up for adoption. She lost all hope and went on a two year binge. Then her children's father got out of jail, and Cruz got pregnant. In November 2016, she delivered a healthy baby girl who was taken away from her in the hospital.

When Cruz was discharged, she went straight to a drug clinic, where they gave her a second chance at Our Hope. She said God, too, gave her another chance to be the good mother she always wanted to be. This time at Our

Hope the counselors insisted Cruz had to get rigorously honest with her feelings if she wanted to stay sober. Finally Cruz understood that she was the problem. "Before when I was hurt, I used. When I was angry, I used. When I was sad, I used. When I was happy, I used." Our Hope taught her how to be emotionally honest, the sine qua non of recovery. Our Hope's program also led her out of the chaotic life her brain disease created into the structured, orderly days she leads now. Cruz has a job, lives in the Catholic Community's first Step House, has a sponsor, a recovery coach, and best of all, sees her seven month old daughter whose foster mother has cared for her as her own child.

Cruz dreams of having her older children back in her life one day. She prays, "They will want to find me and see me as the good mother I always wanted to be for them. I never thought God would let me be a mother again. Now by God's grace, I have another chance."

March Calendar of Fr. Provincial

- 2 **Chennai:** Guanellian Religious Vows Class for 4th Year Theologians - DGMS
- 3 **Chennai:** 'Diakonia' and Legal Implications Class - DGMS
- 9 **Madurai:** Meeting with Archbishop
- 19 **Chennai:** St. Joseph's Feast Mass

God is the Cause and He has Called Us



CUDDALORE - The 6th Annual Guanellian Lay Movement Meeting was January 20th-21st. This two-day program allowed office bearers and the delegated members from Andra, Bangalore, Chennai and Cuddalore to gather with great enthusiasm. It was a wonderful journey for the laity to experience and share the Guanellian spirit. Fr. Visuvasam, Provincial Delegate and local Superior, welcomed the group reminding them of the words of Pope Francis about the participation of the Laity and how our Founder encouraged the participation of the Laity in the mission. He spoke of the Guanellian Charism, "Paternity of God," encouraging the laity to live their vocation, carry their cross and walk the Calvary with Christ as the focus. Fr. Rosario gave the next talk. He spoke of Christian Virtues, quoting from the Bible how Christ Himself showed trust in Abba Father by praying in silence before doing anything. Without God at the center we are only doing social service. We must spend time in prayer to gain strength to do God's will. In prayer God will reveal and inspire us with a plan, show us the method to execute and fulfill His will.

The second day began with Adoration and Holy Mass. Fr. Francis gave the first talk, speaking about the three Virtues taught by our Founder. He said when we allow evil to be the sower the harvest will be pride, greed and lust. Whereas, when we allow God to be the sower the harvest will be humility, poverty and mortification through which we can overcome evil and do great good. A Guanellian Cooperator shared her journey from being a benefactor, GLM member and finally a Cooperator. Her experience inspired the members and helped them to understand how they too can become Guanellian Cooperators. The members' spirits were strengthened and renewed to continue their good work.

Pilgrimage to Velankanni

CUDDALORE - A pilgrimage is a journey or search of moral or spiritual significance. It is a journey to a shrine or other location of importance to a person's beliefs and faith. Don Guanella Boys Home arranged a pilgrimage on February 10th to Velankanni. 75 students embarked on the visit for their own spiritual benefit, to be healed or to achieve a higher level of faith. The students attended the Holy Mass specially offered for students who are preparing for the government exam. The students made a good confession as a preparation for the Lenten season. On the way home, the students visited Poombukar, a historical site, Karaikal Beach and Chidambaram Temple. The pilgrimage was successful, the boys were refreshed, happy and blessed.



Way of the Cross

KUMBAKONAM - The Way of the Cross was prayed at "Our Lady of Rosary Church" in Jebamalaipuram, one of the substations of Guanella Nagar Parish. Fr. Christu Raj, Director of St. Mary's ITI, celebrated Holy Mass after Stations. In his homily he said that in life we like experiences that give joy but we don't like suffering, which teaches a lesson. Therefore he urged us to accept the suffering and still live a happy life. The Members of Parish Council, Legion of Mary and GLM members participated in this Spiritual activity. Fr. A. John Bosco, SdC closed the service by thanking everyone for their participation.

A Day at Gingee Fort

CHENNAI - The Don Guanella Evening School community held its Annual Picnic on February, 18th. It was an excursion and trekking experience for the children to Gingee Fort, a historical site in Tamil Nadu. Everyone gathered at Don Guanella Major Seminary to begin the journey with the blessings and prayers of Fr. A. C. Peri. During the four hour trip the children and their staff danced, sang songs and had a lot of fun. After

arriving they visited various places at the fort. They enjoyed climbing the hills and frolicking along with the explanations of those historic sites both at Rajagiri and Queen Fort. The day ended with the expression of heartfelt thanks to Fr. Soosai, the Provincial Superior, and the coordinators of DGES. The day was more enjoyable with the use of a bus free of charge from the DMI College of Engineering, Pazhanchur.



Cooperators Lenten Recollection

BANGALORE- As Lent began the Cooperators surrendered themselves into the hands of Jesus to walk the path to Calvary. To enhance the spirit within the Cooperators a two-day Lenten Recollection was organized at NBCLC February 17th-18th. The Cooperators and their Delegate Fr. Adaikalam spent two days in prayer, meditation, Adoration, Holy Mass and study of the General Statutes which is a very important part of their formation. They truly thirsted to understand the Guanellian Charism and deepen the call within themselves. It is very important that each Cooperator is aware of the Statutes and learns more about the Founder and his teachings. It was a fruitful recollection which also helped them to bond as a family. The members also planned charitable activities as a Lenten mission and prayed for the success of their endeavors.



World Differently Abled Day

KOPPAKA - World Differently-Abled Day was celebrated on a grand scale February 18th at Guanella Bhavan. The observance of the Day aims to promote the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in the political, social, economic and cultural aspects of life. His Lordship Jaya Roa Polimera con-celebrated Holy Mass with the Guanellian priests in the presence

of many differently-abled children. Fr. Sunil Francis in his introduction spoke about the importance of the day and that Guanellians have incorporated the celebration into their congregations because their primary mission is to work for the differently-abled. During his homily, the Bishop insisted that children with disabilities are God's gift and not to be seen as a burden to society or the family. He preached the Gospel of Christ quoting the life of St. Guanella. It was an eye-opener for the people, offering a fresh perspective on persons with disabilities. He congratulated the Guanellian fathers and sisters for their service to the Diocese of Eluru and elsewhere. After Mass, as a token of love, gifts were distributed to 100 differently-abled



persons, a cultural program was presented and a delicious meal was served to all.

Medical Camp

CUDDALORE - The Rotary Club in collaboration with Arupadai Medical College organized a free medical camp at Don Guanella Boys Home on February 24th. This was the first time the students and staff were provided with general health check-ups this year. More than 87 students and staff of DGBH were treated free of charge. Mrs. Jeyanthi and other staff volunteers did the exams, working hand-in-hand with doctors from Arupadai Hospital. General health check-ups, hearing tests and eye exams were among the many services provided. Various conditions including malnutrition and skin disorders were treated. Students were given referrals to Arupadai Hospital for further treatment, also free of charge.



Feast Day of St. Niño

MANILA - Each year the Servants of Charity celebrate the feast of St. Niño beginning the celebration with a procession. On January 21st the procession was followed by a Eucharistic celebration presided by Fr. Charlton Viray, SdC. During the homily, Fr. Charlton talked

about being child-like, "Children should be our example in how we should be humble and how we should forgive easily." There were about 200 children who came from Pantranco, Roque, and Pingkian for the event. They prepared presentations similar to those done for Sinulog festival presentations in Cebu. Last year games were arranged for the children and the seminarians of Servants of Charity in association with the youths of the (GYM) Guanellian Youth Ministry.



Communio 2018

MANILA - The Sisters of St. Dorothy of St. Paula Frassinetti, hosted this year's retreat on February 6th at St. Paula's Center. Communio is celebrated every single year to strengthen the camaraderie among neighboring



religious congregations. Sisters from the Community of Caritas Sisters of Jesus, Community of the Sisters of St. Dorothy, our brothers and priests from Servants of Charity and for the first time this year five sisters from Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus participated in the different activities and everyone was well prepared for their contributions.

During the event Fr. Rajesh delivered a talk about "service" and having great relationships among communities, he was also the main celebrant of the Mass. The day ended with a fraternal meal where everybody participated in an exchange of names to become prayer partners until the next Communio. We hope to continue this activity to strengthen bonds not only within our own congregations but with the other communities as well.



Pasta among Friends

CHELSEA - In what has become an annual tradition, the Servants of Charity hosted members of the local community for a memorable dinner on Thursday February 8, 2018. The dinner, lovingly known as the “Pasta and Priest Dinner,” is an outgrowth of the Fall Dinner Auction held at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital-Chelsea in November, and there were approximately 50 people in attendance. The meal was prepared by the SLC kitchen staff, and included three types of pasta, along with tossed salad, vegetables, and plenty of desserts provided by the guests.



There were six priests present, including Fr. Enzo Addari, Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, Fr. David Stawasz, Fr. Satheesh Alphonse, Fr. Leo Joseph, and Fr. William J. Turner – pastor of St. Mary Parish in Chelsea. Of course no Italian dinner would be complete without plenty of Italian red wine, and a great time was had by all.

Reaching out to Area Families

CHELSEA - One of the strategic goals of St. Louis Center is to become a resource of information and support for local families in the community who have children or adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Two Special Needs Family seminars were conducted in 2017, and a third was presented on



Thursday, February 22nd with twenty-one people in attendance. This time the seminar took on a local flavor, as Deana Fisher, MSW and C.O.O. of SLC, took on the topic of “Coping with Alzheimer’s” in adults with I/DD. Next, SLC parent Judy Greenbaum tackled the topic of “Accessing the ‘Systems’ Maze,” in an attempt to deal with the complexities of a reluctant government bureaucracy that regularly obstructs families with special needs. The families that attended were very grateful for the sharing of information.

St. Louis Center's Got Talent

CHELSEA - In place of the regular physical fitness work outs, the residents of St. Louis Center displayed their skills in the Annual St. Louis Center's Got Talent event.



Caitlin Blomquist coached

each resident to help them decide what songs they might like to sing or dance to. They each took a turn to wow the celebrity panel of judges with their minute long performances. No matter what the score, each participant was a winner for getting on stage before the crowd. Cookies were served after the winners were announced.

Residents Enjoy Pistons Basketball

CHELSEA - The residents of St. Louis Center were once again treated to a night of professional basketball hosted by the hometown Detroit Pistons on February 28th. The evening featured a thrilling game between the Pistons and Milwaukee Bucks that ended in a dominating Pistons win, ending in a score of 110 – 87. There were 30 SLC residents and staff members at the game, who were guests of Pistons play-by-play television announcer George Blaha, who invited the group down to the floor of Little Caesar’s Arena at the end of the game for handshakes and photographs. Mr. Blaha is a major benefactor of SLC, and serves as the celebrity chairman of the annual Golf and Glory Outing in June at the University of Michigan Golf Course. Along with the visit with George Blaha, the residents simply enjoyed a night on the town and eating enough pizza and hot dogs as they could handle. They returned to SLC a tired but happy bunch!



March Calendar of Events

- 10 **Chelsea:** Vocational Retreat for Boys
Grass Lake: Prayer and Pizza Girls' Group
Kumbakonam: Lenten Pilgrimage to Our Lady of Periyanyaki Shrine - Mettur
- 10-11 **Manila:** Vocation Seminar
- 12 **Grass Lake:** Mother of Divine Providence Day - PUSJ
- 18 **Kumbakonam:** Half-day Recollection for Parishioners
- 19 **St. Joseph, Husband of Mary**
Grass Lake: St. Joseph's Table - PUSJ
- 24 **First Religious Profession of Servants of Charity (1908)**
Chelsea: SLC Residents attending Prom - OLF
- 25 **Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion**
- 28 **Anniversary of the Death of Fr. Mazzucchi**
- 29 **Maundy Thursday**
- 30 **Friday of the Passion of the Lord**

31 **Holy Saturday**

Best Wishes and Prayers to:

- 1 **Bro. Jesu Doss:** birthday
- 2 **Fr. Prakesh Philemen Raj:** birthday
- 4 **Fr. Maria Julian Bernard:** birthday
- 5 **Fr. John Joseph:** feast day
- 6 **Fr. Bernandes:** birthday
- 10 **Fr. Antony Kalai Selvan:** birthday
- 13 **Fr. John Bosco, Fr. Paulraj P.:** birthday
- 15 **Dcn. Abraham:** birthday
- 19 **Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, Fr. Soosai Rathinam, Fr. Jayasoosai, Fr. Edal Vinoth Joe, Fr. Joseph Fernandez S., Fr. Vellington, Bro. Joseph Rajarathnam:** feast day
- 20 **Fr. Louis Baskar:** birthday
- 21 **Fr. Rishar Raffee Jegan:** birthday
- 25 **Fr. Roosevelt:** birthday
- 29 **Fr. Alphonse Maria Ligori:** birthday
- 30 **Fr. Dominic Sebastian Baskar:** birthday



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Reflections
MIDWEEK
FROM PIOUS UNION OF ST. JOSEPH

In February, the Pious Union of St. Joseph will begin sharing an email offering a Midweek Reflection. Reflections will be quotes from the Bible or by Saints offering you a moment of reflection in the midst of your week.

Interested in receiving the weekly reflection to your inbox? Please share your email address with Kelly Flaherty at kellyf@stlouiscenter.org.



Have questions or comments about this newsletter? Email the Communications and Community Relations Office at: kellyf@stlouiscenter.org